

### Abstract of the Disclosure

A voltage is applied to an electrode of an electrostatic chuck for chucking a semiconductor substrate, and the application voltage is controlled stepwise by means of a voltage control section. In the electrostatic chucking system, a temperature sensor may be provided for detecting the temperature of the semiconductor substrate held by the electrostatic chuck, wherein a signal output from the temperature sensor is input to the voltage control section to thereby control the applied voltage.

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